

We claim:

1. A method comprising:

in an audio/video programming guide apparatus:

- providing access to characterizing descriptors as individually correspond to a plurality of discrete selectable items of audio/video content, wherein at least some of the discrete selectable items of audio/video content differ from one another with respect to at least one of:
 - bearer media;
 - primary transmission service provider;
 - data format;
- providing at least one selection criterion;
- applying the at least one selection criterion with respect to the characterizing descriptors to provide a resultant selection of the plurality of discrete selectable items of audio/video content;
- displaying programming guide information comprising information regarding at least a portion of the resultant selection.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

- responding to a remote control by scrolling through the programming guide information comprising information regarding at least a portion of the resultant selection.

3. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

- detecting user selection of a particular one of the plurality of discrete selectable items of audio/visual content.

4. The method of claim 1 further comprising a user database and wherein providing at least one selection criterion further comprises using information from the user database to characterize the at least one selection criterion to be provided.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein using information from the user database to identify the at least one selection criterion to be provided comprises:

- accessing information from the user database to discern preferences of a particular user;
- accessing the characterizing descriptors as individually correspond to a plurality of discrete selectable items of audio/video content;
- comparing the preferences of a particular user to the characterizing descriptors as individually correspond to a plurality of discrete selectable items of audio/video content.

6. The method of claim 4 further comprising:

- responding to a remote control by selecting a particular one of the plurality of discrete selectable items of audio/visual content.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein providing at least one selection criterion comprises:

- supplying at least one user-defined keyword; and
- matching the at least one user-defined keyword with at least one of the characterizing descriptors as individually correspond to a plurality of discrete selectable items of audio/video content.

8. An interactive programming guide comprising:

- characterizing descriptors as individually correspond to a plurality of discrete selectable items of audio/video content, wherein at least some of the discrete selectable items of audio/video content differ from one another with respect to at least one of:
 - bearer media;
 - primary transmission service provider;
 - data format;
- at least one selection criterion;
- control circuitry that:
 - applies the at least one selection criterion with respect to the characterizing descriptors to provide a resultant selection of the plurality of discrete selectable items of audio/video content;
 - displays programming guide information comprising information regarding at least a portion of the resultant selection.

9. The interactive programming guide of claim 8 wherein the control circuitry comprises filter means for comparing the at least one selection criterion with at least some of the characterizing descriptors to provide the resultant selection.

10. The interactive programming guide of claim 8 and wherein the at least one selection criterion is based, at least in part, upon a preference of a present viewer of the interactive programming guide.

11. The interactive programming guide of claim 8 wherein the at least one selection criterion comprises a user-defined keyword.

12. The interactive programming guide of claim 8 wherein the at least one selection criterion is retained in a database.

13. A method of providing a programming guide comprising:

in an audio/video programming guide apparatus:

- providing access to characterizing descriptors as individually correspond to a plurality of discrete selectable audio/visual programs, wherein at least some of the discrete selectable audio/visual programs are supplied by different content service providers;
- providing at least one selection criterion that corresponds to a given individual;
- applying the at least one selection criterion with respect to the characterizing descriptors to provide a resultant selection of the plurality of discrete selectable audio/visual programs;
- displaying programming guide information comprising information regarding at least a portion of the resultant selection.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein providing at least one selection criterion that corresponds to a given individual further comprises ascertaining an identity of a present viewer.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein providing at least one selection criterion that corresponds to a given individual further comprises further comprises using the identity to recall at least one previously stored selection criterion.